

record numbers, particularly when compared to the previous Republican President. The unenforcement argument has no basis in reality.

Then, lastly, they say, well, this has to do with comprehensive immigration reform. Comprehensive immigration reform is not the law of the land. The bill was passed by the Senate. It hasn't even been acted upon by the House, let alone sent to the President for his signature. And even if a pathway toward citizenship were created, if you look at the legislation, only individuals in this country since December of 2011 would be eligible.

Yet the blame Barack Obama caucus doesn't care about the facts. Well, here are the facts. The individuals, the children who are fleeing and who are coming to this country, are trying to escape extreme violence, gang activity, drug trafficking, sexual abuse, and intimidation. The Northern Triangle countries of Central America—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—are among the most violent in the world. Honduras is the murder capital of the world—number one. El Salvador is number four, and Guatemala is number five.

How do we know that this phenomenon is not simply Uncle Sam throwing his hands up saying come into our country? Well, here is another reason. All of the Central American neighbors to our south outside of these Northern Triangle countries have also experienced an exponential increase in unaccompanied minors. Mexico, Belize, Panama, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua have all experienced significant increases in children coming to those countries, more than a 400 percent increase collectively in asylum applications in 2012.

This is not a pull from the United States. These children are running for their lives. And so we have got to address it with an understanding of what is the root cause of the humanitarian crisis.

Several of us on the Judiciary Committee have introduced the Vulnerable Immigrant Voice Act because we believe that the unaccompanied children should have access to counsel. It would benefit the taxpayer in making immigration proceedings more efficient and ensuring expedited removal when merited and in making sure that unnecessary detention doesn't take place.

Now, many of these children will not have a valid legal basis to remain, but some will. Some will have asylum claims, U visa, or Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, and for that reason we should give them access to counsel and do what is right for these children.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of a package of

human trafficking legislation to be considered by the House today. I also rise to recognize and support all the good work done by my colleagues to combat the hideous crime of human trafficking.

Madam Speaker, as a former United States Ambassador, I was exposed firsthand to the horrors of human trafficking on an international level. I witnessed and reported on the devastating consequences of human trafficking, but never in my wildest dreams did I ever think human trafficking was so rampant right here in the United States of America.

Madam Speaker, right now, there are young women and children being forced into prostitution in virtually every district across this Nation. In fact, I was shocked to learn that my own hometown of St. Louis has been identified as one of the top 20 areas for sex trafficking in the United States.

Madam Speaker, this problem is hiding in plain sight. Every year, thousands of young Americans' lives are impacted by this despicable crime. However, I take hope from all the good work being done by law enforcement and those who work in victims' services. Most importantly, I take hope from all the survivors of this hideous crime. Their strength gives us strength; their resolve gives us inspiration; and their steadfast commitment to ending sex trafficking gives us all the courage to fight.

Madam Speaker, because of the efforts of many individuals and groups, I am happy to report that Congress has taken notice of this very serious problem. Years of work have raised awareness of this issue and have laid the foundation for the long overdue action that Congress is presently taking. I applaud these efforts, and I look forward to continuing this work for years to come.

However, Madam Speaker, there is much work yet to be done. As legislators, we have an obligation to come together and do something because we can, because we should, and because we must. I urge Senator REID to take up the bills that the House has already passed that take steps to address this horrible crime, including the Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation, or SAVE, Act, which I had the pleasure of passing with overwhelming bipartisan support.

THE CRISIS IN FOREST FIRE FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, we have a crisis in firefighting funds here in the United States of America, and what has this Congress done about it? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Zero. Nada. It hasn't even held a hearing.

Right now there are 11 major fires burning in Oregon, five in Washington—one the largest in the history

of the State—two in Utah, two in Idaho, one in California, and one in Arizona. There are forecasts for a substantial amount of new lightning storms moving through, and that means more fires. Our resources are about at their maximum, and the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service are about to run out of funds. Now, this was predictable.

The budget set by the Republicans and PAUL RYAN was totally inadequate. There was a proposal, which is the rarest of things in this town, a bipartisan—Republicans and Democrats—bicameral—Senate and House—proposal supported by the President of the United States, and that was to look at what has happened over the last 10 years of the dramatic increase in the severity and the occurrence of fires, particularly in the Western United States, on public lands and to give the Forest Service a budget adequate to fight those fires year in and year out. And also, for those extraordinary fires, the ones that are pretty much unprecedented in history because of mismanagement, climate change, and a number of other things, to fight those with emergency funds just like we deal with tornadoes, hurricanes, and earthquakes.

That money should not come out of the budget of the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior, because what do they have to do? Starting later this month, they are going to devastate the remainder of their budget. That means, instead of going out and reducing fuels on fires through contracts, using private contractors and mitigating the future risk of fire, they are going to have to cancel those contracts for this year because they are going to have to spend the money to fight the fires.

Then, it is not only firefighting contracts they have to cancel, they have to devastate all across their budget, including recreation programs and their timber sale programs, things that bring in revenue to the Federal Government. Any State that has Federal lands administered by the Department of the Interior or the Forest Service—most of the States in the Union, much more of an impact in certain States than others—will see a detrimental impact because the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are going to have to rob their budgets to pay for the costs of these fires.

It also means that we didn't have as many people pre-deployed; we didn't have as much equipment pre-deployed; and we didn't have all the resources we needed ready. We also need a whole new firefighting fleet. We are using World War II aircraft. They are kind of at the end of their useful life. And we are now pressing into service planes that are not particularly efficient at fighting fires because we don't have a fleet of planes, a modern fleet of planes, to assist our firefighters to help save their lives on the ground and help save the lives of people in the communities that are affected.